

I wish to express my objections to this NPRM. Since 9/11/2001, airline security has been elevated by increased screening of passengers and installation of strengthened flight deck doors. In the near future we are likely to see pilots armed under the Federal Flight Deck Officer program. The attitude of passengers has also changed result of the 9/11 attacks. It has already been demonstrated that passengers will no longer sit passively when presented with a threat in the cabin as they did in the 1970's "take me to Havana" hijacking era. Despite having been disarmed by the federal government (I, for example, can no longer carry my Leatherman Tool aboard an airliner) passengers have more than once demonstrated the courage and initiative necessary to deal with deadly threats aboard their aircraft.

Given these circumstances, I believe this rule to be an unnecessary burden upon the air transportation industry. In addition I strongly object to the possibility of this same or similar rule being applied to Part 91 operations.

First, there are still a considerable number of aircraft operating under Part 91 that do not have electrical systems and therefore do not have any transponder installed. Second, useful load and CG are critical considerations in many aircraft operating under Part 91 and the weight of either an additional transponder and/or the wiring and switches to initiate a "hijacking" code would have adverse effects on weight and balance and therefore safety of operations. Third, removing all power in many light aircraft electrical systems simply requires turning off the Master switch. Re-engineering and re-certifying these aircraft to comply with such a ruling would be extremely expensive. Fourth, the cost of an upgraded, replacement, or additional transponder and its associated installation costs would place an unfair and excessive burden on the owner/operators of many Part 91 aircraft without any quantifiable increase in security. Fifth and last, many aircraft operated under Part 91 are rental aircraft flown by a variety of pilots. Unfamiliarity with different installations of "hijack" transponders would increase the chances of an inadvertent activation with possibly deadly consequences.